



# THE MILEAGE

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## India-France-UAE virtual meeting boosts trilateral cooperation

**New Delhi:** India, France, and the UAE held a virtual meeting to discuss progress in trilateral cooperation. The discussions covered key areas such as economy, energy, environment, and innovation. India, France, and UAE trilateral focal points meeting were held virtually, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Wednesday. The discussions between the officials of the three nations focussed on cooperation as per the Joint Roadmap agreed upon last year. "India-France-UAE Trilateral Focal Points meeting held virtually," the official spokesperson of MEA, Randhir Jaiswal wrote in a post on X.

Discussions covered progress in trilateral cooperation as per the Joint Roadmap agreed in Feb 2023, including in areas of economy, infrastructure, innovation, energy, environment, culture, education & P2P exchanges," the post added. At the beginning of February 2023, Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan



Kwatra participated in the India-France-UAE Trilateral Dialogue and discussed taking the cooperation forward in the fields of defence, energy and environment, innovation and people-to-people exchanges, according to the statement released by the Ministry of External Affairs. This meeting came as the follow-up after the Foreign Ministers of India-France-UAE adopted a roadmap during their telephone call on February 04, 2023.

The three foreign minis-

ters had met for the first time in a trilateral format in September 2022 on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. They agreed to establish a formal trilateral cooperation initiative, with the aim of expanding cooperation in various fields of mutual interest in acknowledgement of their shared desire to promote international stability and prosperity and to further build upon the constructive and collaborative ties that exist between the

three countries. At that time, the three sides had agreed that the trilateral initiative would serve as a forum to promote the design and execution of cooperation projects in the fields of energy, with a focus on solar and nuclear energy, as well as in the fight against climate change and the protection of biodiversity, particularly in the Indian Ocean region, as per a joint statement. For this purpose, the three countries planned to explore the possibility of working with

the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) to pursue concrete, actionable projects on clean energy, the environment, and biodiversity. The statement further explained that the trilateral initiative will serve as a platform to expand cooperation between the three countries' development agencies on sustainable projects. India-France-UAE agreed that they will seek to ensure greater alignment of their respective economic, technological, and social policies with the objectives of the Paris Agreement."

In support of these endeavours, a range of trilateral events will be organized in the framework of the Indian Presidency of the G20 and the UAE's hosting of COP-28 in 2023, respectively," the statement had said. The three countries also agreed to expand their cooperation through initiatives such as the Mangrove Alliance for Climate led by the UAE and the Indo-Pacific Parks Partnership led by India and France.

## Blast across LoC, search operation launched

**Jammu and Kashmir:** According to officials, the blast occurred during reported movement across the LoC. Authorities have launched a search operation in the area following the incident. A blast has been reported across the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials confirmed on Thursday. The incident, which occurred late Wednesday night, is believed to have taken place near the zero line in the Laam sector, amidst suspicious movement. According to officials, the blast occurred during reported movement across the LoC. Authorities have launched a search operation in the area following the incident. The exact nature and cause of the blast are currently under investigation. No casualties or further details have been reported yet. Further updates on the situation are awaited as the search operation progresses.

## Rajnath Singh admitted to AIIMS Delhi

**Delhi:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has been admitted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Delhi on July 11 due to complaints of back pain, according to hospital officials. AIIMS cell in-charge Dr. Rima confirmed that Singh, was admitted early in the morning and is currently in the Old Private Ward. "He is stable and under observation," Dr. said, adding that the Defence Minister is undergoing a series of tests to determine the cause and severity of his condition. Singh, a prominent figure in Indian politics, has held the position of Defence Minister since 2019 and has been a key member of the government, overseeing national security and defence.

## Terrorists forced villagers at gunpoint to cook food before Kathua ambush

**Jammu and Kashmir:** Terrorists, who ambushed an Army convoy in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, and left five personnel dead and several others injured, had forced villagers to cook food for them at gunpoint before launching their deadly attack.

The terrorists, equipped with body cameras, aimed to seize the weapons of the Army personnel during the ambush. Despite being injured, the soldiers exhibited immense bravery and thwarted their attempts.

Among those who died in the line of duty, were a Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) and four other Army personnel. The attack took place on the rugged Machedi-Kindli-Malhar

road near Badnota village in Kathua district, a region characterised by its challenging terrain and poor road connectivity. This assault marks the fifth terror attack in the Jammu region within a month, highlighting a disturbing escalation in terrorist activities.

Sources said that the terrorists deliberately targeted remote areas far from security formations, exploiting the time it takes for reinforcements to arrive due to the difficult terrain and inadequate infrastructure. In response to the attack, security agencies have intensified their investigation and over 20 suspects have been detained for questioning by the police as part of the ongoing probe.

## Indira Gandhi Airport police crackdown on visa and passport fraud, 108 agents apprehended

**New Delhi:** In a significant move to combat visa and passport fraud and bolster national security, the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport Police in the national capital have apprehended 108 fraudulent agents. This operation comes in response to a surge in illegal immigration facilitated by these unscrupulous individuals. The intensified efforts, marked by strategic operations and notable successes, have reinforced the integrity of air travel and national security. Data from the Delhi Police reveals that in the past six months alone, the IGI Airport Police have detained 108 fraudulent agents. This figure represents a dramatic increase compared to 51 arrests during the same period in 2023. The police



have shifted their focus to holding agents accountable rather than solely targeting passengers, who often become unwitting victims of illegal immigration schemes while seeking better opportunities abroad. This strategic approach aims to address the root causes of these scams, leading to a substantial improvement

in detection and apprehension efforts. Additionally, the police have undertaken a comprehensive review of pending cases where only passengers had been previously arrested. Investigating Officers have been briefed and tasked with tracking down and prosecuting the fraudulent agents involved.

## Assam streamlines college scholarship programme, benefits 19 lakh students

**Guwahati:** Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced significant improvements to the state's college scholarship programme, addressing feedback from educational institutions and benefiting millions of students from low-income families. The government has implemented a new system where scholarship funds are directly deposited into college bank accounts at the time of admission, following suggestions from college authorities. This change aims to ease financial pressures on institutions and ensure smoother operations. "So far, 19 lakh students in Assam have benefited from the scheme," Sarma stated, highlighting the programme's wide-reaching impact. The Chief Minister detailed the evolution of the free admission policy, which began in 2016 for first-year degree, higher



secondary, and postgraduate students. It was later expanded to include third and fifth-semester enrollments following student requests. Addressing concerns raised by college principals about delayed compensation and operational challenges, Sarma announced a more immediate reimbursement process. "This year, 95,000 students whose parents earn less than 4 lakh rupees annually have taken

admission free of cost," he said. To further streamline the process, the government will distribute Rs 60 crore to Dispur college principals, covering the costs of free admissions for these 95,000 students. The revamped system, utilising the Samarth portal for tracking free admissions, aims to ensure that colleges can continue operating smoothly while providing accessible education to deserving students.

## Supreme Court collegium nominates first Manipur judge for top court elevation

**Imphal:** The Supreme Court Collegium recommends Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court Nongmeikapam Kotiswar Singh and Acting Chief of Madras High Court R Mahadevan for elevation to the top court. The Supreme Court Collegium recommends Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court Nongmeikapam Kotiswar Singh and Acting Chief of Madras High Court R Mahadevan for elevation to the top court. On appointment, Justice Singh will be the first judge from the State of Manipur to be appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court. "His appointment as a Judge of the Supreme Court will provide representation to the North-East, and in particular he will be the first judge from the State of Manipur to be appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court," stated the resolution of Collegium. Collegium consisted of Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud and Justices Sanjiv Khanna, BR Gavai, Surya Kant, and Hrishikesh

Roy. The resolution stated that, "Justice Singh has an impeccable record, both in judicial capacity and in terms of the work which has been rendered by him on the administrative side, as the Chief Justice of the High Court for Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

Considering the candidature of Justice N Kotiswar Singh in terms of his judicial performance, administrative acumen, integrity and merit, the Collegium is of the view that he is eminently suitable for being appointed as a Judge of the Supreme Court." Justice Mahadevan, judge of the Madras High Court, is presently the Acting Chief Justice. Also Read: Manipur: Kuki students' body asks CM to reveal peace talks' details: 'If it's for real...' "Being conversant with the work of Justice Mahadevan on the judicial side and as a senior judge of the High Court, the Collegium is of the view that he is eminently suitable for appointment as a judge of the Supreme Court," added the Collegium.

It further said that Justice Mahadevan belongs to a backward community from the State of Tamil Nadu and his appointment will bring diversity to the Bench.

The Collegium has taken due note of the fact that Justice Mahadevan ranks third in the order of presently serving judges of the Madras High Court including the judges who have been posted as Chief Justices outside the Madras High Court, resolution stated. "At this stage, the Collegium has given precedence to the candidature of Justice Mahadevan in order to give representation to the backward community. For the above reasons, the Collegium is of the view that he is suitable and fit for being appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court," it added. The two judges are recommended for elevation as there are two vacancies in the Supreme Court. Justice Aniruddha Bose retired on April 10, 2024, and the Justice AS Bopanna retired on May 19, 2024.

## Sikkim Governor hosts session for UPSC 2025 aspirants

Sikkim Governor Prasad Acharya, graced the counselling and preparatory guidance session at Aashirvad Bhavan today, for UPSC/CSE 2025 aspirants who appeared in the written exam on June 22, 2024. This initiative, under the "Governor Pratibha Protshaan Yojna", marks the Hon'ble Governor's commitment to nurturing talent and shaping Sikkim's future. This endeavour aims to provide comprehensive support to aspirants from Sikkim, laying the foundation for a developed Bharat by 2047. The programme commenced with offerings of floral tribute to the portrait of Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa by the Hon'ble Governor, followed by officers in attendance. Guiding the aspirants were distinguished officials including Mr G.L Meena (IAS), SDM Gangtok, Mr Sandeep Jha (IAS) Asst Collector, Ms Surbhi Sharma, Project UPSC Coordinator at Shri Paavan Chintan Dhara Ashram. G.L Meena (IAS) shared valuable insights and conducted an informative PowerPoint presentation that covered crucial aspects of exam preparation, ensuring that participants gained a deeper understanding of the examina-



tion pattern, syllabus, and effective study techniques. Sandeep Jha (IAS), Assistant Collector Gangtok, provided practical advice, do's and don'ts, and useful suggestions to help aspirants navigate their journey towards success in the civil services examinations. Surbhi Sharma, Project UPSC Coordinator at Shri Paavan Chintan Dhara Ashram, delivered an insightful talk aimed at empowering youth with essential skills for success. The session focused on the pivotal aspects of time management, discipline, and maintaining focus amidst challenges. She also underscored the importance of effective time utilization in achieving personal and professional goals. Following the counselling session, interactive sessions were conducted

for the aspirants with the IAS officers in attendance. Mr Khemraj Bhattarai, Additional Secretary to the Hon'ble Governor, addressed the aspirants and assured them that 'Governor Pratibha Protshaan Yojna' would provide them with able guidance and support.

He encouraged the aspirants to persist in their preparation until they achieve their desired goals, emphasizing the importance of mental preparedness and resilience. The program was attended by Additional Secretary to the Hon'ble Governor, Mr. Khemraj Bhattarai, Mr. Diwas Gautam, Deputy Secretary to the Hon'ble Governor Dr Shyam Narayan, OSD to the Hon'ble Governor, Officers and staff from Raj Bhavan and UPSC aspirants.

## Mizoram CM flies to Ambani wedding

**Aizwal:** Mizoram Chief Minister Laldhuma and his grandchildren have departed for the highly anticipated wedding of Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant. The CM's party was whisked away in a VT VTI Learjet, showcasing the event's opulent nature. The main ceremony promises to be even more spectacular. The Ambani-Merchant union has captured global attention, with pre-wedding festivities already setting a high bar for extravagance. Guests were treated to performances by international sensation Justin Bieber. The Chief Minister and his family are scheduled to return to Aizawl on Monday.

## Bopai Puroik becomes first Deputy Commissioner from Puroik community

**Itanagar:** Arunachal Chief Minister Pema Khandu announced on Facebook the historic appointment of Shri Bopai Puroik as the Deputy Commissioner of the newly formed Bichom district. Puroik, an APCS officer, marks a proud moment for the Puroik community by becoming the first member to hold this esteemed position. Hailing from Lada circle, Bopai Puroik brings a wealth of experience and dedication to his new role. Chief Minister Khandu expressed confidence in Puroik's leadership, emphasizing his pivotal role in driving progress and devel-



opment in the district. "We are delighted to see Shri Bopai Puroik assume this pivotal role," Chief Minister Pema Khandu remarked. "His appointment exemplifies our dedication to inclusivity and empowerment within Arunachal Pradesh. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to him and wish him immense success in his new responsibilities."

## Shri Jayant Chaudhary Spotlights SIDH as Leading Example in Digital Skill Development

**New Delhi:** Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, highlighted the importance of digital infrastructure and collaborative learning models during his SKILLS Bridge Masterclass Series address. The webinar featured prominent dignitaries such as Dr. Haja Ramatulai Wurie, Hon'ble Minister of Technical and Higher Education in Sierra Leone; Ruben Sargsyan, Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Affairs in Armenia; and Atul Kumar Tiwari, Secretary of

the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. During his address, Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, said, "At the heart of this transformation lies the SkillIndia Digital Hub (SIDH), which is a leading example of how digital public infrastructure can revolutionize learning and skill development. SIDH is more than just a platform; it is a trusted and transparent ecosystem that converges diverse elements of our vast skilling landscape."

The webinar discusses AI-Powered Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH) as a tool for promoting Lifelong Learning (LLL) for the future workforce. It was jointly organized by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), International Labour Organization (ILO), World Bank and UNESCO. The webinar attracted over 120 delegates and 3000 participants with the discussion centered on leveraging digital infrastructure, work-based learning models, and industry-academia partnerships to bolster the skills and lifelong learning ecosystem.

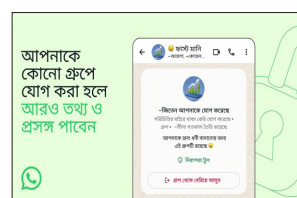
## Times Now Doctors Day Conclave Highlights Need for 'Risk-Grading' in Tobacco Industry

**New Delhi:** To commemorate Doctors' Day, the Times Now Doctors Day Conclave brought together leading medical professionals to celebrate their contributions and address pressing health issues facing India. One such critical issue is the devastating toll of tobacco use. While existing policies aim to curb tobacco consumption, the human and economic cost remains significant. The current national tobacco control policies in India have not yielded desired results, resulting in millions of deaths annually due to tobacco-related diseases. The panel discussion at the Conclave highlighted the urgent need for a new, comprehensive approach to combat addiction-driven non-communicable diseases, particularly nicotine addiction. Yugal Sikri, Vice Chairperson & Managing

Director of RPG Life Sciences, emphasized the gravity of the situation, stating, "Addressing non-communicable diseases is not just important but critical, demanding a fresh and comprehensive approach to combat addiction driven NCDs. The rise of these NCDs linked to addiction is alarming, with tobacco alone responsible for one in six NCD-related deaths." Dr. Sequeira, a prominent public health expert, emphasized the need to differentiate between nicotine and tobacco. He argued that while nicotine is addictive, it is not directly responsible for the cancer, lung, and heart diseases that kill millions of Indians annually. Instead, other chemical compounds in tobacco and the smoke from burning tobacco contribute to these illnesses and deaths.

## To help users stay safe in group messaging WhatsApp is rolling out a new feature

**New Delhi:** If you're added to a group by someone you don't know, you'll now see a context card giving you more information about the group. This includes who added you, how recent the group was created, and who created it. From there, you can decide whether to stay or leave the group, and review some of the safety tools available to stay safe and secure on WhatsApp. This is particularly helpful if you just met someone or a group of people, and haven't yet saved them in your



contacts – or it can help confirm whether or not it's a group you know or want to be in. This update provides WhatsApp users with another layer of safety and security. This has already begun rolling out to users, and will be available to all users in the coming weeks.

## Effortless Styling: The New Dyson Airstrait™ Straightener

**Shillong:** Dyson, fuelled by the desire to improve everyday technology, unveiled the Dyson Airstrait™ straightener – wet to dry straightening with air. No hot plates. No heat damage. Engineered for multiple hair types, stylers can achieve a natural straight style, with body and movement, whilst maintaining the strength and healthy look and feel of their hair. The hair tress is contained by two arms, from which a precisely angled high-pressure blade of air is forced downwards and into the hair, both simultaneously drying and straight styling, with one machine. Dyson is investing £50 billion to accelerate research and technology development in the beauty industry, focusing on the science of styling. The company has studied hair structure, airflow dynamics, thermal, mechanical, and chemical damage, and its effects on hair health. The machine uses precision air jets with two 1.5mm apertures to accelerate airflow, creating two high-velocity downward blades of air. These blades, projected at a 45° angle, converge to form a focused jet, directing airflow to straighten hair with control, resulting in a smooth, shiny finish. James Dyson, Founder and Chief Engineer said, "Delivering the ease-of-use that people love about straighteners but with high-velocity air blades, saves time, maintains hair strength and achieves an everyday natural straight style".

## Samsung India Celebrates First 100 Teams in 'Solve For Tomorrow' Selection

**Guwahati:** Samsung, India's leading consumer electronics brand, has announced a shortlist of 100 teams for its flagship CSR initiative - 'Solve for Tomorrow', designed to foster an innovation ecosystem in the country. This shortlist includes 50 teams each from the 'School' and 'Youth' track who will now compete further in the national education and innovation competition. The competition has conducted regional shortlists this year, reaching out to the next generation of Indian innovators in remote towns like Khurda in Odisha, Kacharand Kamrup Rural in Assam, and Amreli in Gujarat. The Youth Track's top 50 ideas on 'environment and sustainability' are unconventional and future-focused, focusing on issues like deforestation, plastic waste management, marine pollution, carbon emissions, unsustainable packaging, and poor water management. 232 participants from 100 teams are preparing for the 'Solve For Tomorrow' competition, enhancing presentation and communication



skills through expert training and mentoring, to prepare for regional rounds starting mid-July. SP Chun, Corporate Vice President, Samsung Southwest Asia said, "We have received some really well-articulated ideas, and it is incredibly inspiring to see such presentations and clarity of thought coming from the young lot". The 'School' track proposed innovative solutions for community and inclusion issues like mental illness, LGBTQ community inequalities, digital literacy disparity, and job-ready gap between academic and technical skills.

## E-Cigarette Problem in Thailand: Committee Introduces Three Policy Alternatives

**Shillong:** Niyom Wierathan-dithakul, Phrae MP of the Party for Thailand and chairperson of the Special Parliamentary Committee studying e-cigarette laws and measures in the country, proposed three approaches, 1). Continue the ban on e-cigarettes and toughen existing laws, 2). Regulate heated tobacco products (HTPs) while maintaining the e-cigarette ban, 3). Regulate both e-cigarettes and HTPs.

The committee, comprising 35 members from state agencies, civil organizations, and individuals, has invited experts to examine the multifaceted impacts of e-cigarettes on health, society, children, youth, the economy, and law enforcement. The committee has taken into consideration the state of reality in Thailand, where e-cigarettes have been a longstanding



societal issue. He emphasized that these efforts are meant for national interest & asserted that protecting children and youth remains the top priority for the committee.

Niyom noted that, although e-cigarettes are currently illegal in Thailand, their usage remains widespread. Therefore, the committee must seek regulatory & control measures

appropriate to Thailand's circumstances, state of reality and context. The committee has formed two sub-groups to consider regulatory measures and prepare a report, focusing on Thailand's specific context. The study's results will be presented to the House of Representatives for further decision by the executive branch or government on their chosen approach.

## The all new Blaze X comes with segment's first Curved AMOLED display

**Guwahati:** Lava International Ltd., has announced the expansion of its Blaze series with the launch of its latest offering, the all-new Lava Blaze X. Setting new benchmarks in the affordable smartphone segment, the Blaze X comes with segment's first Curved AMOLED display. The new Blaze X comes in two stunning colors variants Starlight Purple and Titanium Grey. It will be available on Lava e-store and Amazon starting 20th July.Mr.



Sumit Singh, Product Head, Lava International Ltd., said, "The new Blaze X, the latest addition to the line-up is developed with three key parameters at the epicentre – segment - first curved Amoled display, performance and aesthetics. I hope

the fans like our new Blaze X and enjoys the experiences that it is designed to deliver." The smartphone flaunts a stunning 16.94 cm (6.67") 120 Hz Curved AMOLED Display with punch hole design providing an immersive experience to the users. Equipped with a 64MP + 2MP rear camera featuring the Sony sensor and a 16MP front camera. The starting price of the all-new Lava Blaze X is Rs. 13999\*( inclusive of bank offers).

## Gagan Narang to replace Mary Kom as Chef-de-Mission for Paris Olympics



**New Delhi:** Gagan Narang, four-time Olympian and 2012 Olympic Games men's 10m Air Rifle bronze medalist, has been chosen to replace MC Mary Kom as the Chef-de-Mission of the Indian contingent to compete in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games beginning on July 26. Gagan Narang, four-time Olympian and 2012 Olympic Games men's 10m Air Rifle bronze medalist, has been chosen to replace MC Mary Kom as the Chef-de-Mission of the Indian contingent to compete in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games beginning on July 26.

Indian Olympic Association President Dr. PT Usha today said the 41-year-old

Gagan Narang's elevation from Deputy Chef-de-Mission's position was an automatic choice in the wake of Mary Kom's resignation. "I was looking for an Olympic medalist to lead our contingent and my young colleague is an apt replacement for Mary Kom," she said.

I am also delighted to announce that India's only woman to win two Olympic medals, PV Sindhu, as the female Flag-bearer alongside Table Tennis ace A. Sharath Kamal in the opening ceremony," Dr. Usha said. "I am confident that our athletes are well prepared to deliver the best results for India in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

## Rain halts India vs South Africa women's T20I, match abandoned



**Chennai:** Persistent rain played spoilsport in the second women's T20 International between India and South Africa, leading to the abandonment of the match after the visitors posted 177 for six in their innings here on Sunday.

South Africa's innings, characterized by a steady scoring rate, ensured they maintained a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

The incessant rain interruptions, which started with a 15-minute delay to the match's commencement, persisted throughout South Africa's batting stint, disrupting play multiple times. With this washout, India now faces the challenge of winning the third and final T20I scheduled for Tuesday (July 9) to avoid a rare home series defeat against South Africa.

## Starc slams decision to drop him for crucial T20 World Cup match against Afghanistan

**Agency:** The defending champions faced a 21-run defeat against Afghanistan, a loss that dented their semifinal hopes. Australian fast bowler Mitchell Starc has voiced his frustration over being dropped for the T20 World Cup Super Eights match against Afghanistan, a decision he believes significantly affected Australia's chances of advancing in the tournament. The defending champions faced a 21-run defeat against Afghanistan, a loss that dented their semifinal hopes. This was the second consecutive World Cup match against Afghanistan that Starc missed, heightening his discontent. Starc was replaced by left-arm spinner Ashton Agar for the match. While Agar managed to restrict the Afghan batters, he failed to take any wickets, a strategy that backfired. Speaking on the Willow Talk podcast, Starc did not hide his disappointment. "No -- two World Cups in a row," Starc lamented, referring to his exclusions in consecutive tournaments against Af-



ghanistan. The decision to bench Starc stemmed from the team's observation of previous games at the St Vincent ground, where spin had proved effective. "They saw previous games on that ground with spin playing a part and obviously Ash and the left-arter enticing them to make a change," Starc explained. Starc's frustration is not new; he was also omitted from a crucial match against Afghanistan in the 2022 T20 World Cup held in Adelaide, which similarly

resulted in Australia failing to reach the semifinals. Following the recent loss to Afghanistan, Australia also succumbed to India in the Super Eights, resulting in their elimination from the competition. Starc criticized the tournament's pre-seeding and scheduling, which placed Australia in a predetermined group despite their performance. "We finished ahead of England and end up where we were pre-seeded as the second side. All of a sudden, you're in a different group," he

noted. He also highlighted the logistical challenges faced by the team during their Caribbean tour, suggesting better planning could have been beneficial. "We had the two night games and the third was a day game, so it wasn't the best preparation. We had a delayed flight out of St Vincent, a 90-minute drive from the airport to the hotel in St Lucia, and then a 10 o'clock toss," Starc detailed, acknowledging the travel difficulties between venues.

## President Murmu rallies for sports, plays badminton with Saina Nehwal



**New Delhi:** President Droupadi Murmu demonstrated her passion for sports by engaging in a friendly badminton match with Olympic medalist Saina Nehwal at the Rashtrapati Bhavan court. The presidential match precedes a special event in the 'Her Story - My Story' lecture series, which showcases accomplished

women Padma Awardees. Nehwal, recipient of both Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan honours, is scheduled to deliver a talk and interact with attendees at the Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre. This initiative aligns with efforts to promote sports and recognise the achievements of Indian athletes. By personally participat-

ing in a badminton match, President Murmu sends a strong message about the importance of physical activity and the celebration of sporting excellence.

The lecture by Nehwal on July 11 is expected to provide insights into her journey as a world-class badminton player and inspire the next generation of athletes.

## Meghalaya annual youth karate championship

**Shilong:** The All Meghalaya Karate-Do Association (AMKA) has announced its upcoming annual karate championship for school and college students. The event will take place from August 22-24, at the Multi-purpose Indoor Hall of the Sports Authority of India's Shillong Training Centre on the NEHU campus. This year marks the 30th Inter School and 12th Inter College Karate Tournament, organised by AMKA with support from the Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs, Government of Meghalaya.

Hundreds of karatekas from numerous educational institutions are expected to participate in the three-day competition. The championship continues to be a significant platform for young martial artists in Karate Tournament, Meghalaya.